

Department of Land and Natural Resources

The department made progress on many of its top initiatives, such as obtaining \$4 million for the statewide Invasive Species Prevention, Response and Control and Outreach program. This will help us face a serious challenge that threatens to harm our quality of life.

Through this program, the department will develop and implement a comprehensive invasive species program in partnership with other state departments, as well as federal, county and private entities. These state funds, combined with at least a one-for-one match with federal funds, will be used to:

- Increase invasive species prevention capabilities;
- Establish in-the-field response and control programs;
- Enhance research and applied technology capabilities; and
- Develop a public outreach program.

The Department was also able to secure its request for \$14 million to improve our state parks. Use of these parks has grown steadily over the past decade, but repairs, maintenance and infrastructure improvements to meet public health standards, building codes and a variety of other requirements – such as accessibility for disabled persons – have lagged.

These improvements will include removing large-capacity cesspools statewide, constructing sewer disposal systems and making other changes to comply with federal mandates. In addition, the department will replace or upgrade comfort stations statewide.

The department also obtained over \$18.1 million to improve the Waimanalo Wastewater Treatment Plant so it meets state and federal water quality standards. For a number of years, the plant has received unacceptable ratings from the Department of Health due to overcapacity and outdated wastewater treatment processes and effluent disposal system. As a result, there have been numerous wastewater spills and other problems. Completion of the improvements will protect the public health and safety of the Waimanalo community.

Another accomplishment involves new legislation establishing a fair and expedited process for handling violations of the department's laws through civil rather than criminal proceedings, when appropriate. This new penalty system will free court time for more serious matters, save taxpayer money and result in quicker resolution of alleged violations.

Unfortunately, the legislature failed to support a \$10 million bond to make improvements to small boat harbors and boat ramp facilities statewide. In addition, the department sustained a severe cut of 87 personnel positions.

- Peter Young, Director